

What is claimed is:

1. An antisense compound 8 to 80 nucleobases in length targeted to a nucleic acid molecule encoding ACE2, wherein said compound is at least 70% complementary to said nucleic acid molecule encoding ACE2, and wherein said compound inhibits the expression of ACE2 mRNA by at least 10%.

2. The antisense compound of claim 1 comprising 12 to 50 nucleobases in length.

3. The antisense compound of claim 2 comprising 15 to 30 nucleobases in length.

4. The antisense compound of claim 1 comprising an oligonucleotide.

5. The antisense compound of claim 4 comprising a DNA oligonucleotide.

6. The antisense compound of claim 4 comprising an RNA oligonucleotide.

7. The antisense compound of claim 4 comprising a chimeric oligonucleotide.

8. The antisense compound of claim 4 wherein at least a portion of said compound hybridizes with RNA to form an oligonucleotide-RNA duplex.

9. The antisense compound of claim 1 having at least 80% complementarity with said nucleic acid molecule encoding ACE2.

10. The antisense compound of claim 1 having at least 90% complementarity with said nucleic acid molecule encoding ACE2.

11. The antisense compound of claim 1 having at least 95% complementarity with said nucleic acid molecule encoding ACE2.

12. The antisense compound of claim 1 having at least

99% complementarity with said nucleic acid molecule encoding ACE2.

13. The antisense compound of claim 1 having at least one modified internucleoside linkage, sugar moiety, or nucleobase.

14. The antisense compound of claim 1 having at least one 2'-O-methoxyethyl sugar moiety.

15. The antisense compound of claim 1 having at least one phosphorothioate internucleoside linkage.

16. The antisense compound of claim 1 wherein at least one cytosine is a 5-methylcytosine.

17. A method of inhibiting the expression of ACE2 in a cell or tissue comprising contacting said cell or tissue with the antisense compound of claim 1 so that expression of ACE2 is inhibited.

18. A method of screening for a modulator of ACE2, the method comprising the steps of:

contacting a preferred target segment of a nucleic acid molecule encoding ACE2 with one or more candidate modulators of ACE2, and

identifying one or more modulators of ACE2 expression which modulate the expression of ACE2.

19. The method of claim 18 wherein the modulator of ACE2 expression comprises an oligonucleotide, an antisense oligonucleotide, a DNA oligonucleotide, an RNA oligonucleotide, an RNA oligonucleotide having at least a portion of said RNA oligonucleotide capable of hybridizing with RNA to form an oligonucleotide-RNA duplex, or a chimeric oligonucleotide.

20. A diagnostic method for identifying a disease state comprising identifying the presence of ACE2 in a sample using at least one of the primers comprising SEQ ID NOs 5 or 6, or the probe comprising SEQ ID NO: 7.

21. A kit or assay device comprising the antisense compound of claim 1.

22. A method of treating an animal having a disease or condition associated with ACE2 comprising administering to said animal a therapeutically or prophylactically effective amount of the antisense compound of claim 1 so that expression of ACE2 is inhibited.

23. The method of claim 22 wherein the disease or condition is SARS.

24. The antisense compound of claim 1, wherein said antisense compound comprises at least an 8-nucleobase portion of SEQ ID NOS NOS 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 26, 28, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 40, 42, 43, 45, 46, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 73, 74, 76, 77, 78, 80, 82, 86, 88, 89 or 90.

25. The antisense compound of claim 24, wherein said antisense compound has a sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOS NOS 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 26, 28, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 40, 42, 43, 45, 46, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 73, 74, 76, 77, 78, 80, 82, 86, 88, 89 and 90.

26. The antisense compound of claim 1, wherein said antisense compound comprises an antisense nucleic acid molecule that is specifically hybridizable with a 5'-untranslated region (5'UTR) of a nucleic acid molecule encoding ACE2.

27. The antisense compound of claim 1, wherein said antisense compound comprises an antisense nucleic acid molecule that is specifically hybridizable with a start region of a nucleic acid molecule encoding ACE2.

28. The antisense compound of claim 1, wherein said antisense compound comprises an antisense nucleic acid molecule that is specifically hybridizable with a coding region of a nucleic acid molecule encoding ACE2.

29. The antisense compound of claim 1, wherein said antisense compound comprises an antisense nucleic acid molecule that is specifically hybridizable with a stop region of a nucleic acid molecule encoding ACE2.

30. The antisense compound of claim 1, wherein said antisense compound comprises an antisense nucleic acid molecule that is specifically hybridizable with a 3'-untranslated region of a nucleic acid molecule encoding ACE2.